

TRUNCATED SAMPLE SCRIPT

This is a series of excerpted scenes from the full script, which runs to 20 pages--about 15 minutes in performance.

If you purchase the rights to the play, I will send you a full script—as a PDF—from which you can make as many copies as are needed by your cast & crew. There is no per-script-fee.

If you wish to secure the performance rights to this script, pre-recorded music tracks and pre-recorded sound effects, contact Sales@RuyaSonic.com

THE NATIVITY PLAY

(15-minute version)

Written for the stage by

Anthony E. Palermo

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TRUNCATED SAMPLE SCRIPT
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Billing shall be in the following form:

(name of producer)
presents

THE NATIVITY PLAY

written for the stage by
ANTHONY E. PALERMO

Long bio:

ANTHONY E. PALERMO (PLAYWRIGHT) is a dramatist, radio performer, and educator based in Los Angeles. His work is heard on NPR and Satellite Radio as well as in audiobooks and on-stage with L.A. Theatre Works, California Artists Radio Theater, numerous theatre troupes, and on national tours. His holiday-themed plays, *A Christmas Carol*, *It's A Wonderful Life*, *Auntie Scrooge--a BACKWARDS Christmas Carol*, and *The Headless Horseman of Sleepy Hollow* have seen productions around the world since 1998. Tony's sound effects work on Yuri Rasovsky's *Sherlock Holmes Theatre* contributed to its winning the 2006 *Audie Award*--the Oscar of audiobooks. Tony directed the 60th anniversary production of Norman Corwin's *On a Note of Triumph*--for which he also re-created Bernard Herrmann's orchestral score. Recently, Tony provided live SFX for shows such as Eric Idle's *What About Dick?*, CART's *Ray Bradbury's Leviathan '99*, LATW's *Hamlet* and *Frost/Nixon*, as well as performing 65 solo shows at the California State Fair. Tony's *Sonic Storytelling Studio* at San Francisco's Exploratorium is a permanent exhibit that has seen thousands of visitors since 2006. His *Sparx Audio Adventures* assembly programs and workshops are popular with schools and colleges across California, the U.S. and the world. Tony also hosts the RuyaSonic Radio Drama Resources website, offering info on writing, directing, scoring, engineering, and sound effects. www.RuyaSonic.com

Short bio:

ANTHONY E. PALERMO (PLAYWRIGHT) is an Audie Award-winning performer, dramatist, composer and educator who has produced dramas and workshops for broadcast, stage, and schools. Tony hosts the RuyaSonic website, offering info on writing, directing, scoring, engineering, and sound effects. www.RuyaSonic.com

NOTE: Up-to-date text of the bios is available at www.RuyaSonic.com/tp2bio.htm You can cut & paste the text into your playbill or program and thus not have to worry about typos.

The Nativity Play (15-minute version)

CAST

NARRATOR	The narrator (Male or Female)
MARY	16 year-old farm girl (F)
JOSEPH	20 year-old carpenter (M)
ANGEL #1	Angel messenger(Gabriel) (M/F)
ANGEL #2	Angel messenger(M/F)
ANGEL #3	Angel messenger (M/F)
HEROD THE GREAT	Tyrannical "King of the Jews" (M)
MALKIOR	Persian Magi (M/F)
GASPAR	Indian Magi (M/F)
BALTAZAR	Assyrian Magi (M/F)
INN-KEEPER	Crusty inn-keeper (M/F)
AMBASSADOR LIVIUS	Roman Ambassador (M)
BO'AZ	Old, wizened shepherd (M/F)
EFRAYIM	Cynical shepherd (M/F)
SHEP	Young shepherd (M/F)
RACHAB	Inn-keeper's kindly slave (F/M)
QUEEN MALTACE	Herod's wife (F)
SHEEP #1	Bleating sheep (F/M)

The above list is for a cast of 18. A smaller cast of 14 can be used if the following roles are combined for one actor each:

Malkior/Angel# 1, Inn-Keeper/Angel #2, Baltazar/Angel #3, Rachab/Queen Maltace

This script refers to pre-recorded sound effects backgrounds which are available as downloadable MP3 tracks for a fee. Contact Sales@RuyaSonic.com for information.

PLOT SYNOPSIS:

I offer three stage-play versions of *The Nativity Play*—a 70-minute, 30-minute and 15-minute. All three dramatize Mary and Joseph's life, mixing reverence and humor to make for an uplifting and entertaining show.

The 15-minute version begins B.C. (*Before Christ*) with several shepherds lamenting life after The Fall and wishing for a Redeemer, then shifts to Nazareth where a pious and charitable Mary receives the Annunciation, then--9 months later--the Journey to Bethlehem, No Room At The Inn, the Birth of Jesus, the shepherds and the Host of Angels, the Adoration of the Magi, Herod's fury, the Slaughter of the Innocents, The Flight to Egypt and the Return from Egypt.

The 30-minute version includes everything in the 15-minute version, but lengthens many scenes. It also adds Mary's visit to Elisabet and Zakarais, Mary's return home, Joseph's dilemma, his angel dream, and a reconciliation between Joseph and Mary. Act 2 adds, the prophecies of Simeon and Anna, This version includes trimmed versions of the canticles from Luke: Mary's "Magnificat" and Simeon's "Nunc Dimittis"--all in English, of course.

The 30-minute version is intended for productions with time limitations: worship services, theaters, classrooms or radio stations.

The 70-minute version includes everything in the 30-minute version, but extends most scenes and includes several that were omitted in the shorter version. Omitted in Act 1: the Nazareth marketplace scene--introducing Mary and including the unusual meeting of Joseph and Mary, a scene with Mary's mother, Joseph's carpentry work on King Herod's palace, the birth and naming of John The Baptist, Mary's family difficulties upon her return home, and Joseph's deciding to "divorce Mary, quietly." Omitted scenes in Act 2: King Herod's plotting the census with the Romans, Mary and Joseph deciding to journey to Bethlehem, and Herod questioning/tricking the Magi. This long version includes the full canticles from Luke: Mary's "Magnificat", Zakarias' "Benedictus" and Simeon's "Nunc Dimittis."

The longer version adds 4 more female roles and 7 more male roles--most of which can be handled through doubling. It also greatly expands Joseph as a character as well as King Herod and Roman Ambassador Livius. Plus it adds two interesting characters who serve as major foils for Mary and Joseph: Mary's stern Aunt Morag and Esdras, Joseph's cantankerous/comical carpentry mentor. There are many more Biblical references, more emotion and humor in the 70-minute version. However the 15 and 30-minute versions still hold up as an emotional and spiritual experience.

SCENE 1 - THE WELCOMING
EXT. THE HOLY LAND - DUSK (JANUARY)
(NARRATOR)

SETTING:

The stage is split between a Pastoral backdrop (STAGE RIGHT) and a town square/courtyard (STAGE LEFT).

The Pastoral area has some olive trees amidst the green hills. When the shepherds are in this area, it is a hillside in Bethlehem. When Mary and Joseph are there, it is an olive grove in Nazareth--or the road to Bethlehem & Egypt.

The town square/courtyard has adobe walls and a functional doorway--preferably with a top/bottom split door--but a regular door will serve.

AT RISE:

No one is on-stage.

THE NARRATOR ENTERS from LEFT to introduce the story. THE NARRATOR takes CENTER STAGE and addresses the audience directly.

NARRATOR: This is the story of The Nativity; How--amidst darkness and despair--there came a Light from Heaven; A Light of salvation, of forgiveness... And of joy!...the birth of Jesus Christ.

However, our tale does not begin on Christmas morning.

SFX TRACK: [FX-01] WINTER WINDS, SHEEP, THUNDER--UNDER NEXT SCENE

NARRATOR: We begin B.C. --before Christ--one Winter's night, on a hillside near Bethlehem, amidst "certain poor shepherds in fields where they lay..."

SCENE 2 – THE SHEPHERDS’ LAMENT
EXT. BETHLEHEM HILLSIDE – NIGHT (JANUARY)
(EFRAYIM, SHEP, BO’AZ, SHEEP #1)

EFRAYIM & SHEP ENTER from RIGHT. SHEP plays a jaw harp--under, until his line

EFRAYIM: (SHIVERS) Oh! Winter! Such terrible weather!

BO'AZ ENTERS from RIGHT.

BO'AZ: (APPROACHING) 'Tis true, Efrayim! ("eff-ray-EEM")
So cloudy! I have not seen such weather since... well....
since Noah.

SHEP: (AMAZED) Noah? Of the Ark?

BO'AZ: Yea! It looked like rain then, too!

EFRAYIM: (SKEPTICAL) What...? Noah...?

SHEP: That was thousands of years ago! Tell me, Bo'az?
("BO-ahhz") How old are you?

BO'AZ: Me? Errrr... quite old, Shep! ("SHEP") Hmmm, Let me
recall... (COUNTS ON FINGERS) Eighty... eighty-one...
eight-two... a thousand! Yes! Yes! I am very old. Very old!

EFRAYIM: (SCOFFS) A thousand? Bah! You are a mere shepherd--and
all that you say is but ill-spun wool!

ALL THREE SHEPHERDS: (LAUGHTER--AD LIB) oh-oh-oh!

SHEP: Ah, but what a filthy, cold life this is!

SHEEP #1: (BLEATS-INDIGNANTLY) Baaaaa!

SHEP: Is there no hope, Bo'Az? Why?

BO'AZ: Why? Well, I can still recall the story... (RECALLING)
Hmmm... In the Garden...

EFRAYIM: Yes! Long ago, the Lord created the first man and woman...

BO'AZ: I said, I can still recall the story, you jackal! (SWATS
EFRAYIM)

SHEP: Oh, but I know that story! Adam and uh...

BO'AZ: ...Eve! At first, they were One with the Lord, and he did
provide all they needed. There was no want, no toil, no
fear...

EFRAYIM: The Garden of Eden.

SFX TRACK: [FX-02] (CROSS-FADE) DESOLATE WINDS, MORE THUNDER--
UNDER SCENE

BO'AZ: But..., they were not satisfied--even in all they had; even being One with the Lord.

EFRAYIM: They were greedy! Fearful!

BO'AZ: They did betray the Lord...

EFRAYIM: Yes! They ate from a forbidden tree. (PAUSE) An.... apricot! A juicy, sweet...

SHEP: Apricot? But I heard it was a pomegranate!

SHEEP #1: (BLEATS-SKEPTICALLY) Baaaaah!

BO'AZ: Fools! The fruit and the cause did not matter! Adam and Eve... betrayed the Lord! They separated themselves from the Lord. And so, were cast out of the Garden. As are we.

EFRAYIM: Then came toil, disease, murder. Look upon us today... bereft and despoiled. Where is the Messiah--the "anointed one"--to deliver us from this world of woe? (SIGHS)

BO'AZ: Yes. We are sheep... preyed upon by wolves.

SHEP: That tyrant, King Herod! And the Romans!

BO'AZ: King Herod and the Romans are only the most obvious evil-doers. The wolves are man-kind! Wickedness burns in every heart! For we are separated from the Lord... alas... (SIGHS) for-ever.

SHEP: (SIGHS) Then life is hopeless.

EFRAYIM: That is why we labor here. Better the real wilderness--this mountainside--than the wilderness of spirit, amidst the towns and villages.

SHEP: Oh, what a dismal world! A night-mare! How shall I ever sleep again?

SHEEP #1: (BLEATS--INNOCENTLY) Baaaahh.

BO'AZ: (CHIDING) Um... Well... have you tried... have you tried... counting... sheep?

SHEEP #1: (BLEATS-DERISIVELY) Baaaah.

ALL THREE SHEPHERDS: (LAUGHTER--AD LIB) oh-oh-oh!

EFRAYIM, SHEP and BO'AZ EXIT, RIGHT. NARRATOR ENTERS, from LEFT to DSC.

SCENE 3 - THE ANNUNCIATION
EXT. OLIVE GROVE - NIGHT (LATE MARCH)
(NARRATOR, MARY, ANGEL #1)

SFX TRACK: [FX-03] (CROSS-FADE WITH PREVIOUS SFX TRACK)
MARCH WINDS, CRICKETS--UNDER SCENE.

NARRATOR: But far north, near the village of Nazareth, a pious young woman named Mary came unto a verdant olive grove--a place of great peace and contemplation...

NARRATOR EXITS, LEFT.

MARY ENTERS, from RIGHT, carrying lamb (toy). An off-stage voice will deliver the lamb's lines below.

LAMB #2: (BLEATING) Baaaaaaah.

MARY: Ah, my little one! We were all searching for you... But I have found you! Come, we shall...

SFX TRACK: FADE WINDS AND CRICKETS--UNDER

LAMB #2: (BLEATING) Baaaaaaah.

MARY: Hush! (WHISPERS) It has become so quiet... Look!
(GASPS) Aaaahhhh!

ANGEL #1 ENTERS, from LEFT.

AUDIO NOTE:

Try using hidden wireless mics for all the angel appearances throughout the play, so their voices can have a reverb effect applied. The first line of their dialogue in a scene will specify [REVERB].

- ANGEL #1: [REVERB] Rejoice, Mary! Hail thou--that art highly favored! The Lord is with thee! Bless-ed art thou among women!
- MARY: (FEARFUL) Bless-ed...? Me...? Oh, sir. What manner of salutation is this? Who...? Wha...?
- ANGEL #1: Fear not, Mary. Rejoice! For thou hast found favor with The Lord. Behold! Thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son!--the anointed one--the Christ! And thou shalt call his name... Jesus.
- MARY: (REALIZING) The Messiah...?
- ANGEL #1: He shall be great! And shall be called “The Son of the Most High.” And the Lord shall give unto him the throne of his ancestor, David.
- MARY: (IN AWE) King...? King David...? (HUMBLY) But... divine sir--messenger of The Lord--how... how shall this be? ... conceive a child...? Um... I know not a man! I am only just betrothed... to Joseph! We have but yet...
- ANGEL #1: The Holy Spirit of The Lord shall come upon thee. The power of the Highest shall overshadow thee! Fill thee... with Grace! And the child... shall be Holy. He shall be called “The Son of God.”
- MARY: (GRATEFUL) Oh, heavenly messenger... (UNSURE) I... I... (CONSENTING) Yes! (INHALES) uh... uh... (TEARFULLY JOYOUS) Behold... the handmaid (INHALES, WHISPERS) of the Lord! Let it be unto me... according to thy word. (BOWS HER HEAD IN PRAYER) Yes.

ANGEL #1 EXITS, LEFT.

SFX TRACK: [FX-04] _____ FLOURISH, THEN WIND & CRICKETS--UNDER SCENE

LAMB #2: (BLEATING) Baaaaaah!

MARY: (COMING OUT OF DAZE) Oh! (TO LAMB) Little one.
What...? A... dream? How... how could I--a country girl--be
“favored... by The Lord?”

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(several pages later...)

MARY: (SIPPING WATER) This well-water is bitter, Joseph, but
there is sweet water ahead. And better days in our future...

JOSEPH: (SIGHS) You think of the future, my wife... I merely feel this
moment. (QUIETLY) But if you do carry the Son of God--
within your womb, what thence shall come?

MARY: Trust the Lord, Joseph. Share my faith!

JOSEPH: I do! But to be parents of... (WHISPERS) the Messiah...?
Are we worthy of such a task? Will he be a prophet? A
priestly-king?

MARY: It is puzzling, yes...

JOSEPH: I am a mere carpenter! You, a farmer's daughter! How can
we foster... a king? Raise... a king? What do we know of
ruling over people?

MARY: Rule? (SIGHS) We only know how to serve others.

JOSEPH: And what could we possibly teach the Messiah?--He that
shall bring justice to all.

MARY: Justice? I know only mercy.

JOSEPH: I worry. How can we--poor people--be the ones to...

MARY: The Lord has called upon me--upon us--to serve him. I surrendered myself to God. And though his ways are beyond our knowing, I shall not waver from the path he set me upon.

JOSEPH: Indeed... I shall serve you--and The Lord--as well as I am able. Let us continue now...

SFX TRACK: [FX-o8] BETHLEHEM WINTER WIND--UNDER SCENE

SCENE 6 - NO ROOM AT THE INN
EXT. BETHLEHEM INN - NIGHT (DECEMBER 24TH)
(NARRATOR, JOSEPH, INN-KEEPER, MARY, RACHAB)

SETTING:

DOWNSTAGE LEFT of the town square backdrop is the Stable/Cave: just some wooden poles with a cross-beam, and perhaps, even a peaked roof--like a traditional Christmas crèche. It is open-faced DOWNSTAGE, with hay bales or boxes inside--and a manger. An Ox and donkey can be seen UPSTAGE standing in stalls. Straw can litter the stable floor.

AT RISE:

JOSEPH and MARY begin CROSSING LEFT, towards the-(UPSTAGE) doorway of the Inn--the functional split door in the town square backdrop.

NARRATOR: And--at the end of nine days travel they did arrive at the tiny village of Bethlehem. But it was crowded with other pilgrims, there to be counted. Joseph and Mary came unto the only inn to be found in the village.

JOSEPH leaves Mary and approaches the door. He knocks (3X). The INN-KEEPER opens it and leans out. Behind him we HEAR raucous travelers dining--beneath the scene.

RACHAB--quietly--ENTERS, from STAGE LEFT. She stops and observes the conversation.

JOSEPH: (APPROACHING) Excuse me, inn-keeper, sir. Do you have lodging available for my wife and myself? We have traveled--many days--from Galilee and are weary.

INN-KEEPER: (WEARY) No! There is no room. No room! Every straw pallet is full! There is no room for any-more travelers!

JOSEPH: But, you see, my wife is expecting a child.

INN-KEEPER: Sleep in the fields below. Or the road!

JOSEPH: She is due to bear the child... soon. Perhaps to-night.

INN-KEEPER: (TAKEN ABACK) Uhh.. I am sorry. (EXITING) But... I cannot help you. Go!

INN-KEEPER EXITS, shutting door--cutting off the raucous traveler voices abruptly.

JOSEPH: (TO HIMSELF) Oh... What shall I do? (CALLS OUT) Mary?

MARY: (DISTANT) Yes, Joseph.

JOSEPH: They have no room. We shall have to look elsewhere.

MARY: (DISTANT) There is not much time...

RACHAB CROSSES to CENTER STAGE.

RACHAB: (APPROACHING) Wait! Sir! Ahaz (“AY-hez”)-- the inn-keeper--is my master, but I think you could lodge in the stable.

JOSEPH: The stable? But my wife...

RACHAB: The stable is dirty, yes. But it is dry--and out of the cold. Go down that path, there!

JOSEPH: Thank you. Thank you for your generosity...

RACHAB: Rachab (“raw-CHOB”) is my name. Ahaz may beat me for my “generosity”, but you need some-where to stay. I was homeless once, myself.

JOSEPH: Thank you, Rachab.

JOSEPH gets Mary and begins to lead her and the donkey LEFT, towards the stable.

JOSEPH: (EXITING) Mary! We have found respite...

As they go in, RACHAB watches.

RACHAB: (TO HERSELF) Ohh! What a life they must lead, the poor wretches. And bringing a child into such a world! (SIGHS)
Fools...

SFX TRACK: [FX-09] _____ LATE NIGHT AMBIENCE--UNDER SCENE

SCENE 7 - THE BIRTH OF JESUS
INT. CAVE/STABLE - AFTER MIDNIGHT (DECEMBER 25)
(NARRATOR, INFANT JESUS, MARY, JOSEPH)

NARRATOR steps forward--still LEFT of the stable.

JOSEPH hangs a linen sheet across the top of the stable façade, covering the DOWNSTAGE opening. JOSEPH EXITS, LEFT.

A light from behind Mary will allow her to give birth with some privacy. MARY--illuminated as a shadow behind the linen curtain--performs the actions described in the narration.

NARRATOR: While a rustic stable was hardly where one imagined the Savior of man-kind to come into the world, this was all the poor couple could provide. (PAUSE) Yet... just after midnight, it came to pass that Mary gave birth to her child...

INFANT JESUS: (NEWBORN CRY) Waaaah!

MARY: (HOLDING HIM UP) There, there, now... my beautiful boy...

NARRATOR: And she named her son, Jesus--thereby fulfilling the prophecy of the angel of the Lord.

MARY: (TO JOSEPH) Joseph! Come see!

JOSEPH rushes in, from LEFT, joining Mary, who continues to follow the actions described by the narration.

SHEPHERDS--quietly ENTER, from RIGHT to occupy the Pastoral set. They pay no attention to what's taking place STAGE LEFT.

JOSEPH: (APPROACHING) Ohhhh! How wonder-ful!

NARRATOR: Then Mary washed the Holy Child. And did take a small vial of olive oil, and dabbed some upon his head, and kissed him. A new light had come unto a weary world. And it was good...

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ANGEL #2: [REVERB] Behold, shepherds!

SHEEP #1: (BLEATING--FRIGHTENED) "Baaahhh!"

SHEP: (WAKING) ZZZZZ--Wha...? (SCREAMS) Ahhh!

ANGEL #2: [REVERB] Behold! I bring you good tidings of great joy! Unto you is born this day--in the city of David--a Savior! A redeemer! Christ, the Lord!

EFRAYIM: (STUNNED) The... the... Messiah! He has come!

ANGEL #2: [REVERB] You shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

SHEEP #1: (BLEATING) "Baaahhh!"

SHEP: A... a manger? A trough to feed animals?

A host of ANGELS ENTERS, from LEFT. (They can each hold a star aloft.)

BO'AZ: (SHUSHES SHEP) Shhh! The... the stars! Look! Angels!
(AMAZED) ...Angels!

ANGELS: [REVERB] "Glory to God in the highest! And--on Earth--peace and good will toward men."

SCRIPT HAS BEEN TRUNCATED AT THIS POINT
(several pages later...)

SHEP: (APPROACHING) Oh! How small! How helpless he is!

BO'AZ: (TO MARY) Thank you, both of you. (STUNNED) How amazing! (TO EFRAYIM) Come, Efrayim. Gaze upon... the Savior!

EFRAYIM falls to his knees, stupefied by the child.

EFRAYIM: (TIMIDLY) I... I... (TO MARY, WHISPERS) Thank you.

BO'AZ: (TO JOSEPH & MARY) Forgive my friend here. This is not the... “conquering” Messiah he expected.

ALL: (GENTLE LAUGHTER) Ha-ha-ha-ha-ha...

MARY rises and picking up the child, offers him to EFRAYIM.

MARY: (TO EFRAYIM) Here, then! Hold him.

SHEP: Go, Efrayim! Hold the child!

EFRAYIM: (TAKING THE CHILD) I... I...

INFANT JESUS: (NEWBORN CRY) Waaa-aaaa!

EFRAYIM: (GASPS) Ohhh! (PANICKED, GIVES CHILD BACK TO MARY) Here...!

ALL: (HEARTY LAUGHTER) Ha-ha-ha-ha!

BO'AZ: If this humble... infant can be the Messiah, then, surely, any of us may enter... the Kingdom of Heaven.

SHEP: (TO JOSEPH) I regret.... we have no gifts... other than our praise.

JOSEPH: Thank you! Your joy is our reward.

BO'AZ” Our joy comes from full hearts. Bless you!

SHEPHERDS withdraw, EXITING RIGHT.

NARRATOR ENTERS, from RIGHT, to CENTER STAGE.

NARRATOR: And it came to pass, at the King Herod The Great's palace in Jerusalem, there arrived three Magi ("MADGE-eye")--skilled in the arts of astrology and ancient lore. They had come seeking the new Messiah, but Herod lied to them, saying he would welcome a successor to his throne. He made them promise to return with news of the Messiah, but secretly plotted to kill the Divine child.

NARRATOR ENTERS, from LEFT.

Under narration, MARY and JOSEPH quietly ENTER--settling DOWNSTAGE the town square door. This is now the interior of a room at the Inn.

NARRATOR: Later that evening in Bethlehem, Mary and Joseph were at rest. In exchange for carpentry chores, the inn-keeper offered a small room--for the couple and their infant. The family planned to return unto Nazareth once the winter rains had abated...

NARRATOR EXITS, LEFT.

SFX TRACK: [FX-12] _____ SHED AMBIENCE--UNDER SCENE

SCENE 9 - THE ADORATION OF THE MAGI
INT. INN-KEEPER'S SHED - DAY (FEBRUARY)
(MARY, JOSEPH, INFANT JESUS, GASPAR, MALKIOR, BALTAZAR,
NARRATOR)

Behind the functional door--UPSTAGE--MALKIOR knocks (3X). JOSEPH opens the (full) door. The MAGI are outside the door.

MALKIOR: Peace be unto you, sir. Are you Joseph, the carpenter? The kitchen slave said we could find Joseph--and his family--in this shed.

JOSEPH: I am Joseph. This is my wife, Mary. And our infant son... Jesus. He is but a few weeks old.

MALKIOR ENTERS, from door.

MALKIOR: May I--and my companions--enter?

BALTAZAR: We are Magi (“MADGE-eye”)--astrologers from the lands of Persia, India and Assyria.

GASPAR: We have followed a star in the heavens, that has led us here--to the Messiah.

MALKIOR: Although we--ourselves--are not Jews, we come... to pay homage to the great Messiah of all nations.

JOSEPH: (STUNNED) Homage? I...

MARY: Do! Do come in. We are but a poor family, yet you are welcome here. Truly!

GASPAR & BALTAZAR ENTER--from door.

MALKIOR: (TO OTHER MAGI) Behold! A Messiah not of glory and palaces, but of humility ...and loving-kindness!

GASPAR: (REALIZING) Of course! The Lord... come to Earth... as a son of man.

BALTAZAR: (PROSTRATING HIMSELF) Bow! Bow, my friends, before the Redeemer, the Christos! (“KREEST-os”)

BALTAZAR: We bring offerings to him!

GASPAR: Gifts!

MALKIOR: (OFFERING) Gold dust... That he may transmute the baseness of man-kind into the gold of Heaven!

GASPAR: (OFFERING) Frankincense... the perfume of the Sanctuary--to drive away the stench of Evil.

BALTAZAR: (OFFERING) Myrrh... to infuse the scented oil for anointing this Divine Child.

MARY: We thank you. Thank you for these gifts--and that you... believe so. (SIGHS) May the Lord’s blessing be upon you and all your people.

NARRATOR ENTERS, from LEFT. The MAGI EXIT, through the door.

NARRATOR: And the Magi--having bestowed their gifts, and feeling great joy--did depart. (PAUSE) But, while they had promised to bring the wicked King Herod news of the Messiah, they were warned--each--in a dream, not to return to the palace. And so, they traveled--by another route--to the East. (PAUSE) And thus, Herod's anger was greatly kindled against them...

NARRATOR EXITS, LEFT.

SCENE 10 - HEROD'S FURY

INT. HEROD'S JERUSALEM PALACE - THAT NIGHT (FEBRUARY)

(HEROD, AMBASSADOR LIVIUS, QUEEN MALTACE)

SETTING:

Herod's throne room is STAGE RIGHT. It can be a temporary structure of stone columns with a drape between them, flanking a throne--preferably on a riser. The throne room is just a bit DOWNSTAGE of the Pastoral backdrop.

AT RISE: Herod and his court are in session.

HEROD angrily throws a goblet down.

HEROD THE GREAT: (SEETHING) They lied! (COUGHS) They betrayed my trust! I will dispatch troops to Bethlehem and kill all newborn sons. This "Messiah" will surely be among them.

QUEEN MALTACE: Herod The Great? Butchering peasant children? (TO LIVIUS) Livius! As Roman ambassador, can you appeal to my husband?

AMBASSADOR LIVIUS: Herod! Why such worry? You are age-d and ill! You shall be dead before this child could ever threaten your rule!

HEROD THE GREAT: (BITTERLY) I am King of the Jews, yet they have always despised me--(COUGHS)--throughout my reign.; when I brought peace--through victory, (COUGHS) prosperity, even rebuilding the Temple of Solomon! They reviled me. Hated me! (COUGHS)

QUEEN MALTACE: But many rulers are hated!

AMBASSADOR LIVIUS: Yes--even Caesar Augustus.

HEROD THE GREAT: However... since they detest me so... if this “Messiah” of theirs has come, I shall put him to the sword! ...Just to spite the Jews! And extinguish their hope!

AMBASSADOR LIVIUS: (IRONICALLY) Such is Herod’s “justice”?

HEROD THE GREAT: Yes! I may be dead soon, but Herod The Great shall outlive their Messiah! History... shall remember... Herod! (COUGHS)

NARRATOR ENTERS, from LEFT and remains on stage, observing, when not speaking. JOSEPH, MARY and INFANT JESUS are asleep in the Inn.

SCENE 11 - THE SLAUGHTER OF THE INNOCENTS
INT. INN-KEEPER’S SHED - NIGHT, MINUTES LATER (FEBRUARY)
(NARRATOR, ANGEL #4)

NARRATOR: Yet, before King Herod’s troops could depart on their wicked assignment, an angel of the Lord appeared unto Joseph--in a dream... saying...

ANGEL #4 ENTERS, from LEFT.

SFX TRACK: [FX-13] SLAUGHTER DREAM--UNDER ANGEL AND NARRATION

ANGEL #3: [REVERB] Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt! And be thou there until I bring thee word--for Herod will seek the child, to destroy him.

ANGEL #4 EXITS LEFT.

As the narration below describes, JOSEPH and MARY will gather the child and EXIT RIGHT .

NARRATOR: Immediately, Joseph arose. And he, Mary, and the child did flee that night. And departed into Egypt--as the angel of the Lord had instructed. Then went King Herod's soldiers unto Bethlehem... And there, did slaughter the innocents... sparing none! Evils were multiplied in the earth. And much mourning and lamenting was heard among the Bethlehem-ites.

SCENE 12 - THE FLIGHT INTO EGYPT

EXT. ROAD TO EGYPT - NIGHT, HOURS LATER (FEBRUARY)

(NARRATOR, JOSEPH, MARY, ANGEL #4, INFANT JESUS)

SFX TRACK: [FX-14] DESERT WINDS--UNDER SCENE

JOSEPH, MARY (holding INFANT JESUS) ENTER--quietly, from RIGHT and settle DOWNSTAGE from Pastoral set. They pause from their travels.

NARRATOR: But Mary and Joseph did join a caravan south... and so, escaped the violence. Later, Joseph did explain to Mary, once safely away...

SCRIPT HAS BEEN TRUNCATED AT THIS POINT
(several pages later...)

NARRATOR: Ad the family dwelt for a time in the land of Egypt. Yet, it came to pass that the tyrant, Herod The Great, did die.

JOSEPH, MARY (holding INFANT JESUS) stand--CENTER STAGE--facing the audience.

NARRATOR:

And, so, Joseph, Mary and Jesus did return unto the land of Israel. And came and dwelt once more in Nazareth.

(PAUSE) Thus... did a new chapter in the life of man-kind continue; One with endless promise, divine mercy and eternal gain! (PAUSE) Rejoice! The Savior had come--for now and ever-more!

==THE END==

CASTING EVALUATION: *The Nativity Play*

Date: _____

18 actors: 3M, 3F, 12M-or-F -OR- 14 actors: 3M, 2F, 8M-or-F)

_____	NARRATOR	The narrator (Male or Female)
_____	MARY	16 year-old farm girl (F)
_____	JOSEPH	20 year-old carpenter (M)
_____	MALKIOR	Persian Magi (M/F)
_____	+ ANGEL #1	Angel messenger(Gabriel) (M/F)
_____	INN-KEEPER	Crusty inn-keeper (M/F)
_____	+ANGEL #2	Angel messenger (M/F)
_____	LIVIUS	Roman Ambassador (M)
_____	HEROD THE GREAT	Tyrant "King of the Jews" (M)
_____	BO'AZ	Old, wizened shepherd (M/F)
_____	EFRAYIM	Cynical shepherd (M/F)
_____	SHEP	Young shepherd (M/F)
_____	GASPAR	Indian Magi (M/F)
_____	+ BALTAZAR	Assyrian Magi (M/F)
_____	ANGEL #3	Angel messenger(M/F)
_____	RACHAB	Inn-keeper's kindly slave (F/M)
_____	+ QUEEN MALTACE	Herod's wife (F)
_____	SHEEP #1	Bleating sheep (F/M)

CASTING MONOLOGUES: *The Nativity Play*

All actors are asked to read some lines, called “sides,” aloud, to audition. The director will cast the roles in our production based upon these readings. Please take a moment to read the lines below several times, both silently and aloud. These monologues can also provide some “back story,” giving an idea of who the characters are and what kind of story we are producing. Since radio actors often play several parts, we encourage the use of different voices or accents when auditioning for the different roles.

NARRATOR: I am the Narrator and I speak in a measured style, often using a biblical syntax. For example: But--on the shore of the Great Sea--Joseph did now labor on Herod’s palace at Caesarea. He served the old carpenter of Nazareth, Esdras (“EHZ-druhs”), who, while he had lost the sharpness of his sight, had lost not the sharpness of his tongue...

MARY: Scripture says, “Despise not a thief, if he steals to satisfy his soul when he is hungry.” It is not stealing if I give this man the pomegranates, is it? A little less for us shall suffice! I am not a simpleton, Aunt Morag! But that man welcomed the flogging! Why did he do that?

JOSEPH: He said, “no Galilean carpenter would work terebinth.” Well, I am not of Galilee. I am a Bethlehem-ite! I shall gladly work this terebinth lumber. But Wait, Mary! All Spring I did work in Caesarea and learned much about carpentry. And... today... (JOKING) I have invented... the wheel! (HOLDS UP SQUARISH WHEEL) Look!

ANGEL #1: Rejoice, Mary! Hail thou--that art highly favored! The Lord is with thee! Bless-ed art thou among women! Behold! Thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son!--the anointed one--the Christ! And thou shalt call His name... Jesus.

- HEROD THE GREAT: (COUGHS) Livius! (SARCASTICALLY) The court of Herod The Great is always eager to lick the (COUGH) boot of Rome. But, you have not come to merely warn me of the latest rumors of these “zealots” with their false-messiahs. (COUGHS) I smell... gold!
- BO’AZ: (OLD SHEPHERD) Yea! David--the great King David--was once a mere shepherd boy. But the Lord avored him, and David did great deeds... (SIGHS) So long ago... Herod and the Romans are only the most obvious of evil-doers. The wolves are man-kind! Wickedness burns in every heart! For we are separated from the Lord... alas... (SIGHS) for-ever.
- BALTAZAR: From the East, we saw a new star rise--a brilliant light in the Heavens--and we have followed it here. You see, the stars portend, “As above, so below”--therefore the Messiah shall come from Bethlehem. But you are wise, great Herod... for a king.
- RACHAB: Wait! Sir! Ahaz (“AY-hez”), the inn-keeper--is my master, but I think you could stay in the stable. Ahaz may beat me for doing this, but you need some-where to stay. I was homeless once, myself. If you should require anything, come ‘round the kitchen. (WHISPERS) But avoid Ahaz. He angers easily.

SOUND TECHNICIAN'S NOTES: *The Nativity Play*

Electronic Effect:

A reverb effect on wireless microphones for the angels would be nice. This would be to depict the heavenly quality of the angels. It is not essential. Many mixing boards now come with on-board reverb effects..

Playback devices:

This show uses many pre-recorded sound effect ambience tracks (crickets, rain, birds, etc). This may require TWO playback devices so you can cross-fade from one to the next quickly.

Pre-Recorded SFX tracks

01	Winter Winds, Sheep, Thunder
02	Wintry Winds, More Thunder
03	March Winds, Crickets.
04	Flourish, Then Wind & Crickets
05	Wind Picks Up, Thunder
06	Cloudburst, Rain
07	Desert Winds
08	Bethlehem Winter Wind
09	Late Night Ambience
10	Wintry Winds, Sheep
11	Stable Ambience
12	Shed Ambience
13	Slaughter Dream
14	Desert Winds